



# STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

11 University Place

1215 Western Avenue

Albany, New York 12203-3399

Barbara A. DeBuono, M.D., M.P.H.  
*Commissioner of Health*

Dennis P. Whalen  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*

**DOH-CACFP:** Number 37 (9/98)

**TO:** Sponsoring Organizations Claiming Reimbursement for Infant Meals

**FROM:** Jeanne Colegrove, State Director  
Child and Adult Care Food Program

**SUBJECT:** Infant Meal Pattern

## **I. Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this memorandum is to transmit the current USDA policy clarifications and revisions regarding commercial infant and other foods creditable as meal components in the infant meal pattern in Child Nutrition Programs.

## **II. Background and Implementation**

The policy clarifications and revisions are as follows, by food category:

### **A. Fruits and Vegetables**

The New York State Child and Adult Care Food Program recommends that the first choice in serving fruit and vegetables to infants should be 100% fruit or vegetable. Plain fruit and vegetable commercial baby food products are generally considered to contain a higher relative quantity of fruit or vegetable and provide more nutrition for the dollar than those with a variety of additional non-fruit or non-vegetable ingredients.

USDA has issued guidance on what would and would not be creditable components to a reimbursable meal. Commercial baby food fruits with modified food starch were previously not creditable because they generally have less nutritional value and may contain less fruit by weight than commercial baby food fruits without modified food starch. They also contain a concentrated sweetener. Commercial baby food fruits with modified food starch may now be a creditable meal component in the Infant Meal Pattern. Fruit or vegetable must be listed as the first ingredient on the label. Commercial baby food fruits and vegetables which contain multiple fruits or multiple vegetables, and list fruit or vegetable as the first ingredient in the ingredients listing on the label, are creditable as a fruit or vegetable. If a label for a commercial baby food fruit or vegetable states that the first ingredient is water, or any ingredient other than fruit or vegetable, the product is not creditable. Although this policy may increase the variety of creditable baby food fruit and vegetable products,

most products containing modified food starch and other ingredients will still not be creditable because the first ingredient in their ingredient listing is water or some other ingredient.

The regulations state that in order to be creditable, a juice must contain 100% full-strength juice.

In addition it is recommended that the following types of juice be selected:

- Fruit juice containing or fortified with vitamin C. Vitamin C promotes the absorption of iron in food into the body.
- Pasteurized fruit juice only. Some kinds of juice and cider have not been pasteurized and may contain harmful bacteria. Frozen concentrate, shelf-stable juice in hermetically sealed containers including infant juices, and canned juices are processed or pasteurized to eliminate harmful bacteria.

#### B. Meat/Meat Alternates

The New York State Child and Adult Care Food Program recommends that the first choice in serving meat and meat alternates for infants be plain commercial baby food meat. Some Gerber products have been reformulated and are creditable as a meal component in the meat/meat alternate category in the Infant Meal Pattern. This includes the Gerber "2nd Foods" baby food meat products which are creditable even if they contain additional ingredients, such as corn starch and, in some cases, lemon juice concentrate. Providers are advised to check with parents to be certain that an infant has tried, and had no negative reaction to a meat product containing ingredients other than meat (such as corn starch). Some infants may be sensitive or allergic to these added ingredients.

Commercial foods and baby foods which are not creditable include:

- Meat sticks or "finger sticks" because they could present a choking risk in infants and, by the manufacturer's declaration, they are designed to match the skills of children over 12 months of age.
- Commercial fish sticks, other commercial breaded or battered fish or seafood products, canned fish with bones. There may be an incidental bone in fish sticks and other breaded fish products.
- Hot dogs, and sausages because infants could choke on these items. These foods are not designed by their manufacturers for consumption by infants.
- Yogurt is not creditable as a meal component in the Infant Meal Pattern. It can be served as an additional food if a parent requests that it be served.

#### C. Bread, Crackers and Infant Cereal

The New York State Child and Adult Care Food Program recommends that older infants be offered bread and cracker type products as a snack option. Eight to eleven month old infants may be offered bread or cracker-type products (not "bread alternates") made from whole-grain or enriched meal or

flour and which are suitable for an infant to consume as a finger food. All allowable breads and crackers must be without nuts, seeds or hard pieces of whole grain kernels. The following foods, which must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour, are creditable in the bread and crackers categories of the Infant Meal Pattern:

#### Bread

- Breads (white, wheat, whole wheat, French, Italian, and similar breads)
- Biscuits
- Bagels
- English muffins
- Pita bread (white, wheat, whole wheat)
- Rolls (white, wheat, whole wheat, potato)
- Soft tortillas (wheat or corn)

#### Cracker-type products

- Crackers - saltines or snack crackers ; matzo crackers; animal crackers; graham crackers made without honey (honey, even possibly in baked goods, could contain *Clostridium botulinum* spores which can cause a type of serious food borne illness in infants)
- Zwieback
- Teething biscuits

If any of the above items are served, they must be prepared in a form that is suitable for an infant to consume as a finger food and reduces the chances of choking (e.g., small thin strips of bread are most appropriate, not a whole or half of an uncut hard bagel, English muffin, pita bread, wheat roll, or soft tortilla).

#### Cereals

- Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold dry) and breakfast cereals (cooked) are not considered “iron fortified dry infant cereal” and are thus not creditable as a meal component in the infant cereal category in the Infant Meal Pattern. Although enriched farina, regular oatmeal, and corn grits, are not creditable as infant cereal in the Infant Meal Pattern, they can be fed as additional foods if the parent requests that they be served.

If you have any questions please refer to the Infant section in the revised Crediting Foods in CACFP guide or contact a CACFP nutritionist at 1-800-942-3858.

# CHART 1

## INFANT MEAL PATTERNS

New York State Child and Adult Care Food Program

FOOD COMPONENTS	FOOD ITEMS	Required Minimum Quantities		
		Birth through 3 months	4 through 7 months	8 through 11 months
<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Breast Milk or Infant Formula (Iron Fortified)</b>	4-6 Fl. oz. (1)	4-8 Fl. oz.	6-8 Fl. oz. (2)
	<b>Fruits and/or Vegetables (3)</b>	0	0	1-4 Tbsp.
	<b>Infant Cereal (4)</b>	0	0-3 Tbsp.	2-4 Tbsp.
<b>Lunch or Supper</b>	<b>Breast Milk or Infant Formula (Iron Fortified)</b>	4-6 Fl. oz. (1)	4-6 Fl. oz. (1)	2-4 Fl. oz. (2 & 5)
	<b>Bread OR</b>			
	<b>Cracker Type Product (3)</b>			
	Whole Grain or Enriched Bread or	0	0	0-1/2 slice
	Whole Grain or Enriched Cracker Type Product	0	0	0-2 Crackers
	Teething Biscuit, Arrowroot Cookies	0	0	0-2
	<b>Breast Milk or Infant Formula (Iron Fortified)</b>	4-6 Fl. oz. (1)	4-8 Fl. oz.	6-8 Fl. oz. (2)
	<b>Vegetable or Fruit (3)</b>	0	0-3 Tbsp.	1-4 Tbsp.
	<b>Infant Cereal</b>	0	0-3 Tbsp.	2-4 Tbsp.
	<b>AND/OR Meat or Meat Alternate (3)</b>			
	(quantity of the edible portion as served)			
	Infant Cereal (4)	0	0	1-4 Tbsp.
	Lean meat, poultry, or fish	0	0	1-4 Tbsp.
	Egg yolk	0	0	1-4 Tbsp.
	Cooked dry beans, peas or lentils	0	0	1-4 Tbsp.
	Cheese	0	0	1/2-2 oz.
	Cottage Cheese	0	0	1-4 oz.